

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

1.     **(Currently Amended)** A polypeptide An isolated polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence at least 80% identical to SEQ ID NO: 2.
2.     **(Previously Presented)** An isolated nucleic acid molecule encoding the polypeptide of claim 1.
3.     **(Currently Amended)** The isolated nucleic acid molecule of claim 2, wherein the isolated nucleic acid comprises the nucleic acid nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1.
4.     **(Previously Presented)** A nucleic acid vector comprising the isolated nucleic acid molecule of claim 2.
5.     **(Currently Amended)** [[A]] An isolated host cell comprising the nucleic acid vector of claim 4.
6.     **(Previously Presented)** A process for producing a polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence with at least 80% identity to SEQ ID NO: 2, the process comprising:
  - (1) culturing the host cell of claim 5 under conditions sufficient for the production of the polypeptide; and
  - (2) recovering the polypeptide.

7. **(Currently Amended)** The nucleic acid vector of claim 4, wherein the nucleic acid vector is selected from the group consisting of a plasmid, a virus, and a bacteriophage.

8. **(Currently Amended)** The nucleic acid vector of claim 4, wherein the isolated nucleic acid molecule is inserted into the nucleic acid vector in proper orientation and correct reading frame such that the polypeptide may be expressed by a cell transformed with the nucleic acid vector.

9. **(Currently Amended)** The nucleic acid vector of claim 4, wherein the isolated nucleic acid molecule is operatively linked to a promoter sequence.

10. **(Previously Presented)** An isolated antibody or antigen-binding fragment thereof that binds specifically to the polypeptide of claim 1.

11–12. **(Cancelled)**

13. **(Previously Presented)** A composition, comprising an antibiotic and the isolated antibody or antigen-binding fragment thereof of claim 10.

14–17. **(Cancelled)**

18. **(Currently Amended)** A method for detecting the presence of *Clostridium difficile* lactate dehydrogenase in a sample, the method comprising the steps of:

- i) contacting the sample with ~~the an isolated antibody or an antigen-binding fragment thereof of claim 10 that binds specifically to a polypeptide consisting of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2;~~
- ii) detecting an antibody-antigen binding reaction; and
- iii) correlating the results of detection step (ii) with the presence of *Clostridium difficile* lactate dehydrogenase in the sample.

19. **(Currently Amended)** A method for detecting the presence of an isolated antibody or an antigen binding fragment that binds specifically to *Clostridium difficile* lactate dehydrogenase in a sample, the method comprising the steps of:

- i) contacting the sample with ~~the composition of claim 1 an isolated polypeptide comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2 or an isolated antigenic fragment of a polypeptide consisting of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2;~~
- ii) detecting any antibody-antigen binding reaction; and
- iii) correlating the results of detection step (ii) with the presence of isolated antibody specific against *Clostridium difficile* lactate dehydrogenase in the sample.

20. **(Previously Presented)** The method of claim 18, wherein the sample is a sample from a patient.

21. **(Currently Amended)** A diagnostic test kit, comprising one or more of:  
the isolated antibody or antigen-binding fragment of claim 10, or the composition  
isolated polypeptide of claim 1, or both; and  
instructions for use.

22. **(Currently Amended)** A kit for the treating a *Clostridium difficile* infection in a patient,  
comprising:  
a therapeutically effective quantity of an antibiotic;  
the an isolated antibody or an antigen-binding fragment thereof of claim 10 that binds  
specifically to a polypeptide consisting of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2; and  
instructions for use.

23. **(Currently Amended)** The medicament composition of claim 13, wherein the antibiotic  
is selected from the group consisting of vancomycin, ramoplanin, teicoplanin, and  
metronidazole.

24–25. **(Cancelled)**

26. **(Previously Presented)** The method of claim 19, wherein the sample is a sample from a  
patient.

27. **(Cancelled)**

28. **(Previously Presented)** A composition comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2.

29. **(Previously Presented)** An isolated nucleic acid molecule, comprising a nucleic acid sequence at least 80% identical to SEQ ID NO: 1.